MF. P.t. 9/25

Letters to the Editor

New JFK Death Doubts Arise

To the Editor:

Before finding the plot which killed President Kennedy "A 'Conspiracy' That Never Was," as you did in an editorial so entitled (Jan. 11), you should have more carefully examined the new evidence which you apparently believe refutes the critics of the Warren Report.

Last week, Dr. John Lattimer viewed the suppressed Kennedy autopsy pictures and X-rays and declared that they "eliminate any doubt completely" that Lee Harvey Oswald was the sole assassin.

First, let me point out that pictures and X-rays of a corpse simply cannot reveal the identity of the murderer or the number of assailants. The films may have revealed a number of things, but they can tell no one, Dr. Lattimer included, whether or not Oswald was the assassin.

Furthermore, Dr. Lattimer is a urologist, not a pathologist. He does not have the expertise to evaluate autopsy films of a gunshot wound victim, and according to the restrictions under which the Kennedy family and the government have outlined for access to those films, he should not have been permitted access because he is not a pathologist.

This particularly disturbing in light of the fact that one of the most eminent and qualified pathologists, Dr. Cyril Wecht, has also been seeking access to the pictures and X-rays only to get a grand run-around from the government.

Dr. Wecht has written serious criticism of the official Kennedy autopsy findings, and his writings have been indorsed by the American Academy of Forensic Sciences.

The Lattimer episode hardly provides support for the findings of the Warren Commission. Quite the contrary, it fuels even extreme conspiracy theories because (1) the government has violated the terms of its contract with the family in permitting an unqualified person to view the autopsy films, and (2) Dr. Lattimer emerged from his examination to declare that the films showed what they could not show.

HOWARD ROFFMAN

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